



TUCSON HISTORIC WAREHOUSE ARTS DISTRICT MASTER PLAN

TUCSON ARTS DISTRICT PARTNERSHIP, INC.

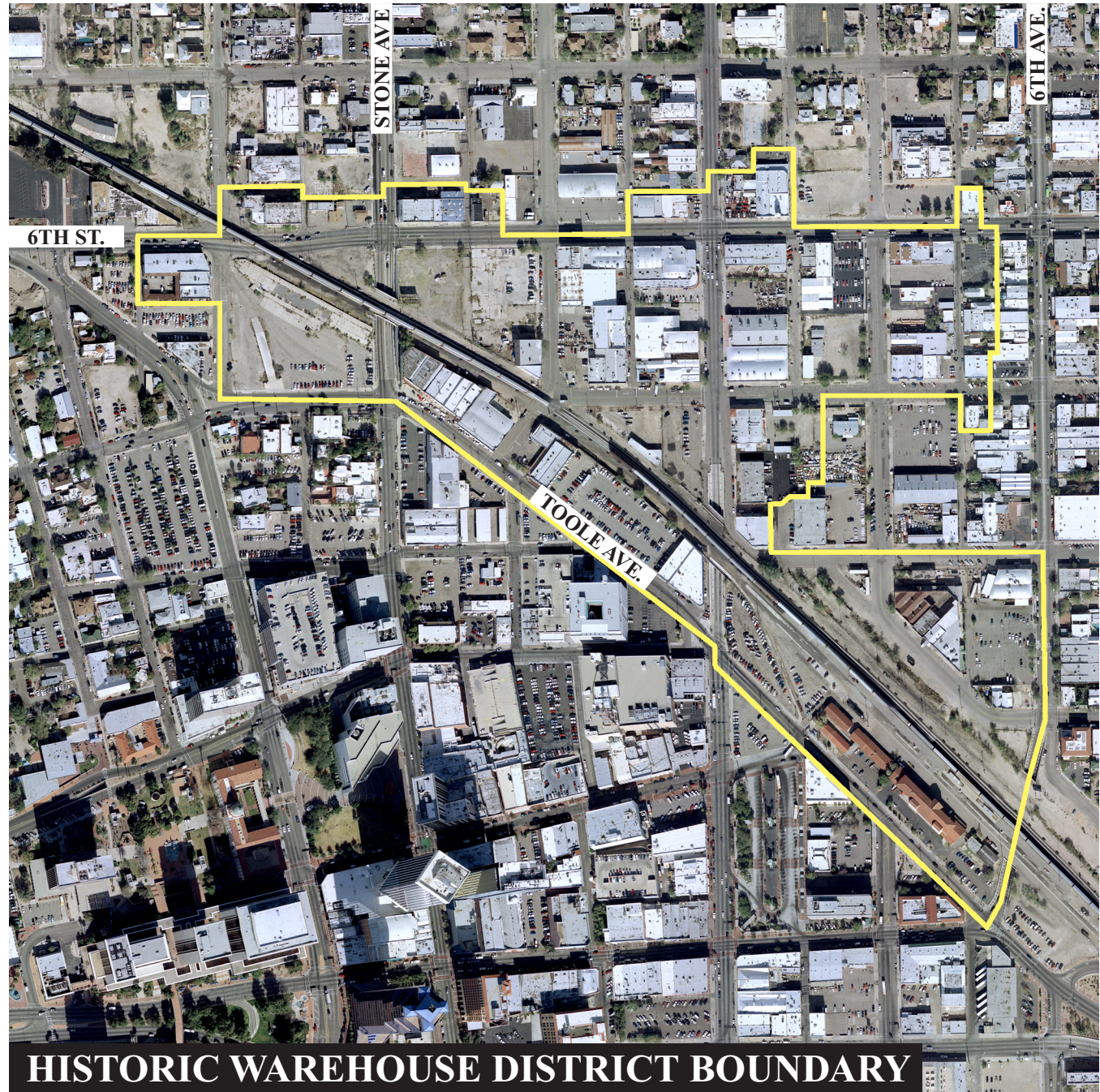
MAY, 2004

POSTER FROST ASSOCIATES, INC.

WITH WHEAT SCHARF ASSOCIATES

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Tucson Historic Warehouse Arts District Master Plan is the product of an intensive community planning effort in downtown Tucson in 2003 and 2004. The plan grows out of the existing community of artists, arts organizations, and public officials dedicated to preserving and growing this thriving and productive arts district. This plan's goal is **to develop the Tucson Historic Warehouse Arts District as a center for incubation, production and exhibition of the arts, with artists at its heart.** The plan sub-goals include: mixed-use, diversity, realistic economics, sustainability, neighborliness, historic preservation, safety, conversion of surface parking lots to compatible arts-related uses, pedestrian and bicycle-friendliness, reduced pass-through automobile traffic, public parking and resolution of environmental problems.

The plan proposes 8 simple recommendations:

1. Discard the current Barraza-Aviation alignment. Study a north-side-of-tracks route.
2. Use an artist-centered management organization to manage district public properties.
3. Improve building facades and safety.
4. Create an "urban artwalk" on Toole Avenue.
5. Strengthen pedestrian/bicycle connections
6. Develop an activities/programming plan.
7. Develop a marketing/publicity plan.
8. Develop four vacant parcels to mixed use:
 - the parking lot west of MOCA.
 - the "Platforms Site" (Stone and Toole).
 - the lot south of the Steinfeld Warehouse.
 - the parking lot at COPE on 7th Ave.



INTRODUCTION

The Tucson Historic Warehouse Arts District Master Plan grows out of sixteen years of incremental transformation of a downtown railroad warehouse district into a thriving production arts district. Artists first became interested in this area in the late 1980's after the Arizona Department of Transportation acquired many warehouse properties for demolition to build a railroad-aligned state highway. The highway was never built, but the State temporarily made the properties available to artists at very low lease rates. In these historic but neglected buildings, artists found an inexpensive and functional place to work, and the district grew. Master leaseholders managed the property, and their artist sub-tenants, on a shoestring.

Within the context of Rio Nuevo - a new City of Tucson commitment to downtown revitalization - this neglected district is emerging as an important piece of a larger downtown puzzle. The State of Arizona is transferring these properties to City of Tucson control. Anticipating this transfer, the City of Tucson sought a plan for how to manage the district and make needed improvements. The artists, fearing that their quiet economical existence would be threatened, sought a plan that would protect their interests in the face of rapid change. This Tucson Historic Warehouse Arts District Master Plan is an attempt to mediate between these needs and concerns, while it maps a new and expansive vision for the district.



MASTER PLAN PROCESS

In August of 2002, the City of Tucson contracted with the Tucson Arts District Partnership, Inc. to produce a Public Participation Plan and a Master Plan for the Tucson Historic Warehouse Arts District. The plans were to focus on the Toole Avenue portion of the District between Stone Avenue and 6th Avenue. Vera Uyehara, Executive Director of the Tucson Arts District Partnership, engaged Rameen Ahmed as the project Planning Coordinator and a team of planning consultants consisting of Poster Frost Associates (Architects and Planners) and Wheat Scharf Associates (Landscape Architects). Phase I, an extensive Public Participation process directed by Ms. Ahmed, gave the full range of community stakeholders the opportunity to provide detailed input to the planning process. Phase I of the Plan was completed on June 30, 2003 and is summarized in three volumes. The Public Participation process was conducted through two separate but complementary processes: 1) interaction with the public through Public Participation interviews, focus groups, public presentations/workshops and interest forms; 2) gathering information regarding the existing land use, zoning, ownership, and infrastructure conditions of the District

In Phase I, there were more than fifty personal interviews, four focus group meetings, two public meetings, and three meetings of the Tucson Arts District Partnership's Warehouse Committee. This information was distilled into a preliminary analysis of problems and opportunities, consisting of ten points:

- The need for an incubation and production area for artists
- The need for an official designation and definition of a Downtown Arts District
- The need to create an organization of the existing community of the area, particularly of the artists
- The need to develop mixed use arts-related space that avoids gentrification and dislocation, is sustainable, and encourages accelerated revitalization
- The need to develop an artist-based investment plan
- The need for an outdoor public performance, events and open space
- The need for development of pedestrian connections and hardscape design to foster a sense of District identity
- The need to recognize the importance of parking and transportation issues
- The need to resolve environmental issues and hazards that can hinder the promotion of future District development
- The need to address noise, street blockage, and the other impacts of train traffic on the District

Underscoring all of the identified problems and opportunities was the fundamental concern relating to: 1) maintaining the rents at their affordable levels; 2) providing longer-term rental agreements; 3) creating a mechanism for valuing the "sweat-equity" investments made by current tenants

Phase II, this Master Plan, grew directly out of the input and recommendations identified in the Public Participation Plan. This process was organized around three public meetings and a series of small stakeholder meetings to flesh out specific details of the Plan. Approximately 80 people attended each of the public meetings. The first public meeting was held on November 18, 2003 with the following agenda: Introductions; Project Overview; Recommendations from *Public Participation Plan*, Proposed Master Plan process, District facts and economics, Case studies of successful arts district plans (Providence, Jersey City, and Minneapolis), and How do we find a solution?. The second public meeting was held on January 15, 2004 with the following agenda: Alternatives and Concepts; Land Use Mix; Open Space; Transportation; Organizational Structure; Draft Conclusions and Recommendations. Finally, on February 24, 2004, the third and final public meeting proposed the following draft plan elements: Master Plan Guiding Principles, Master Plan Goals, and 8 Major Draft Recommendations. The PowerPoint presentations from three public meetings are included on CD within this Master Plan.

CASE STUDIES:

Jersey City, New Jersey

WALDO: Work and Live District Ordinance

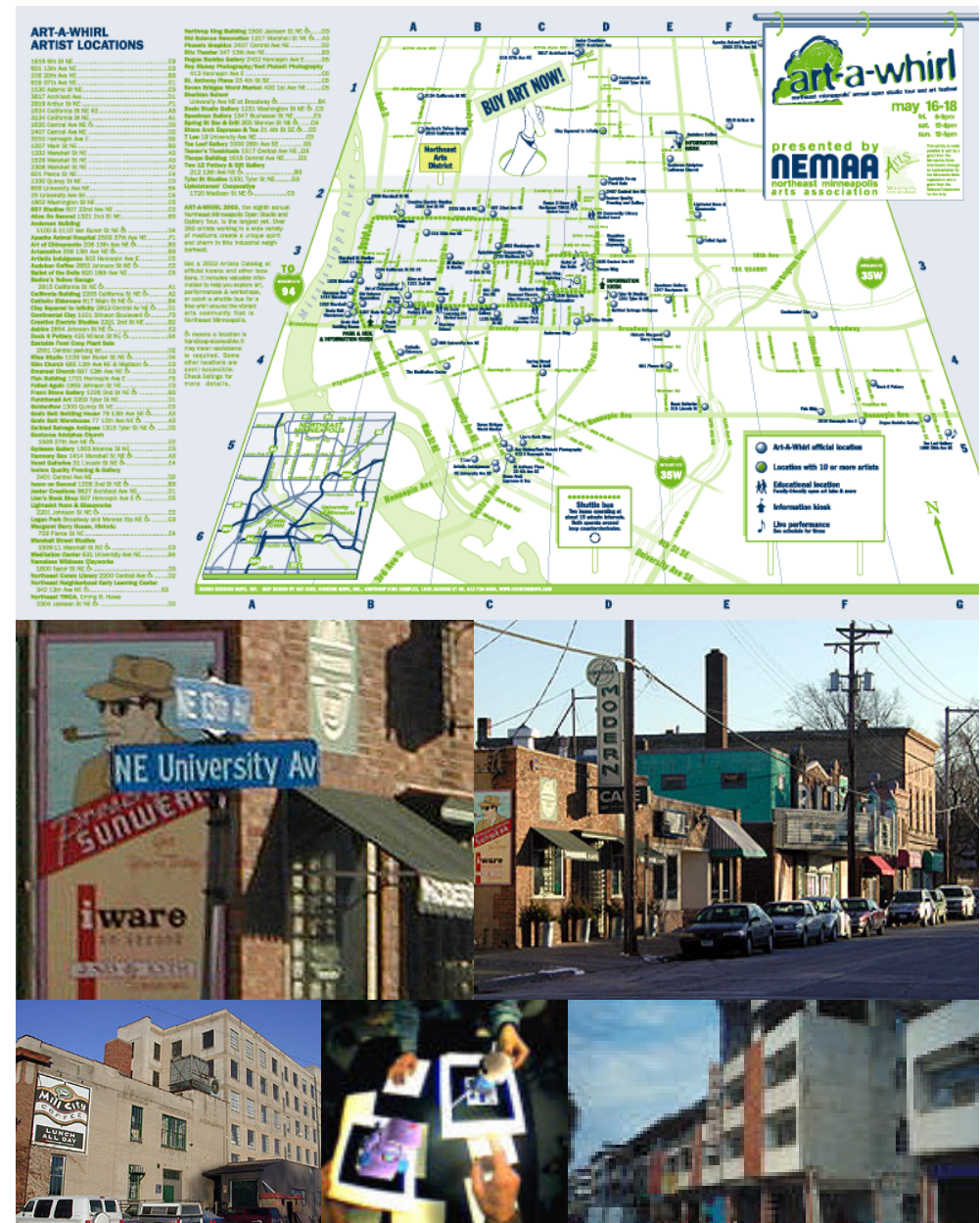
- The goal was to create a cultural center with mixed uses including shops, galleries, performance space and restaurants.
- Established a place for artist live/work space and served to unite surrounding neighborhoods.
- An Artist Certification Board was created as a citizen's advisory board to the Planning Board which certifies artists to qualify for artist housing.
- Permitted uses were classified into principal and accessory uses. Uses included artist work/live space and work studios, mixed resident buildings with a minimum of 51% being qualified artists, arts-related uses, non art-related uses such as restaurants and retail, parking, schools, and parks and open space.
- Building codes were revised to provide use of existing buildings without full compliance and new construction being built in this area was given specific requirements to promote development within the district.



CASE STUDIES:

Minneapolis, Minnesota

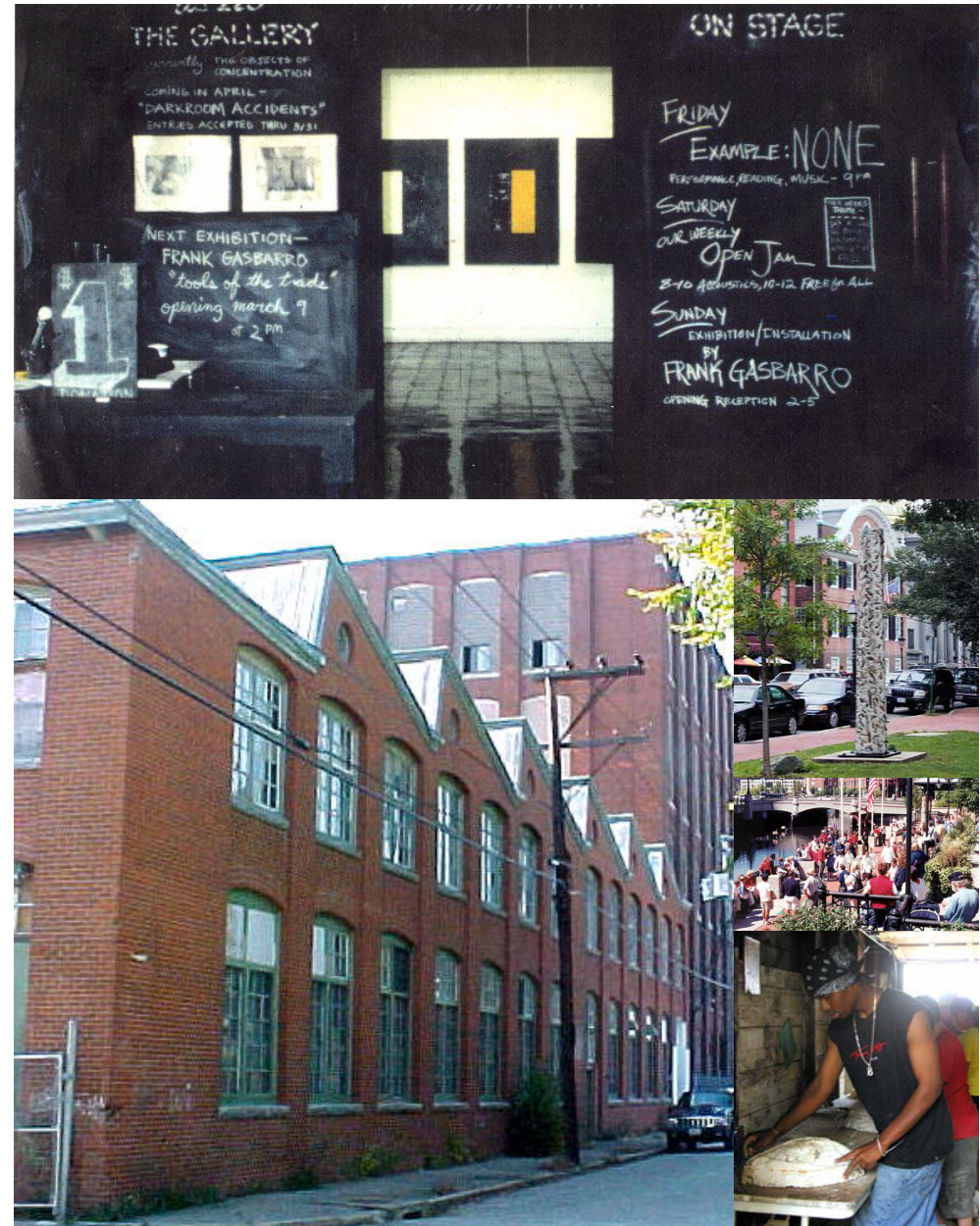
- The goal was to create an identifiable arts district known for arts, shopping, and entertainment.
- Artists were to be given stable rents for at least ten years and provisions were set to give priority to professional artists through a jury system.
- Government funding options were considered to assist artists and incentives considered for galleries who located in the area.
- Goals included finding ways to ensure long term artist presence with finding ways for artists to purchase and own spaces.
- Community Development was to include collaboration between arts and non-arts entities as well as schools and neighborhoods, pedestrian amenities, community gathering places, affordable housing for artists, an outreach program to encourage diversity and the aim for a vibrant business district.
- Programming of events, performing arts, and technical assistance to non-profits were considered.
- Funding, Planning and Zoning were studied and revised to promote the arts.



CASE STUDIES:

Providence, Rhode Island

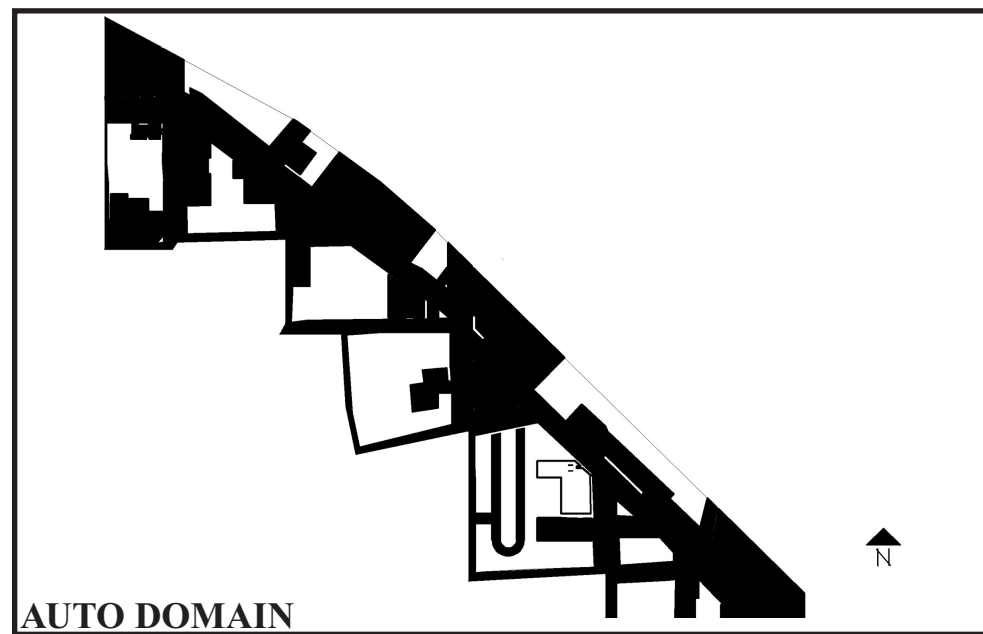
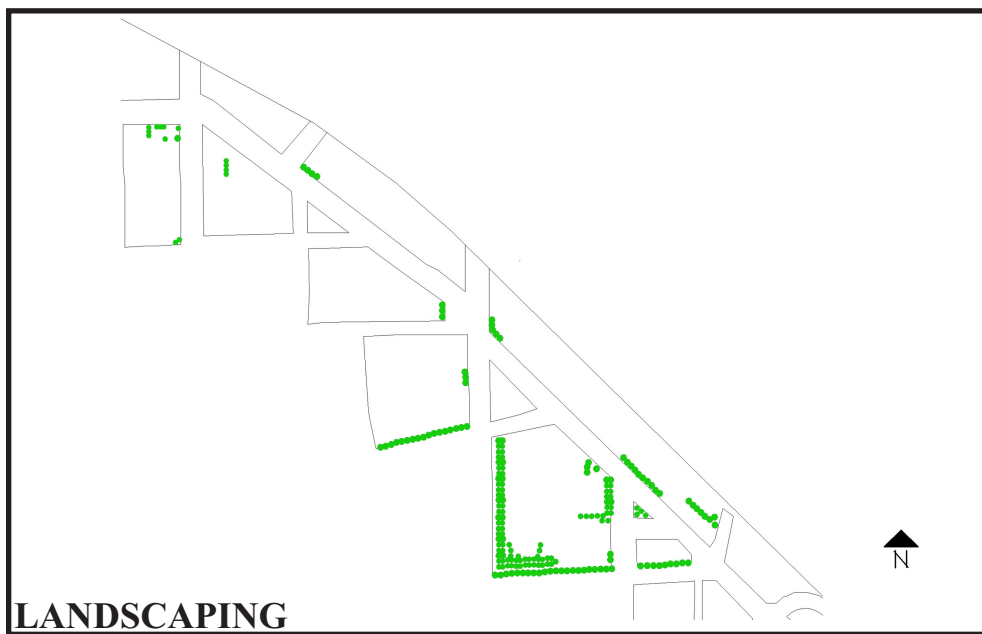
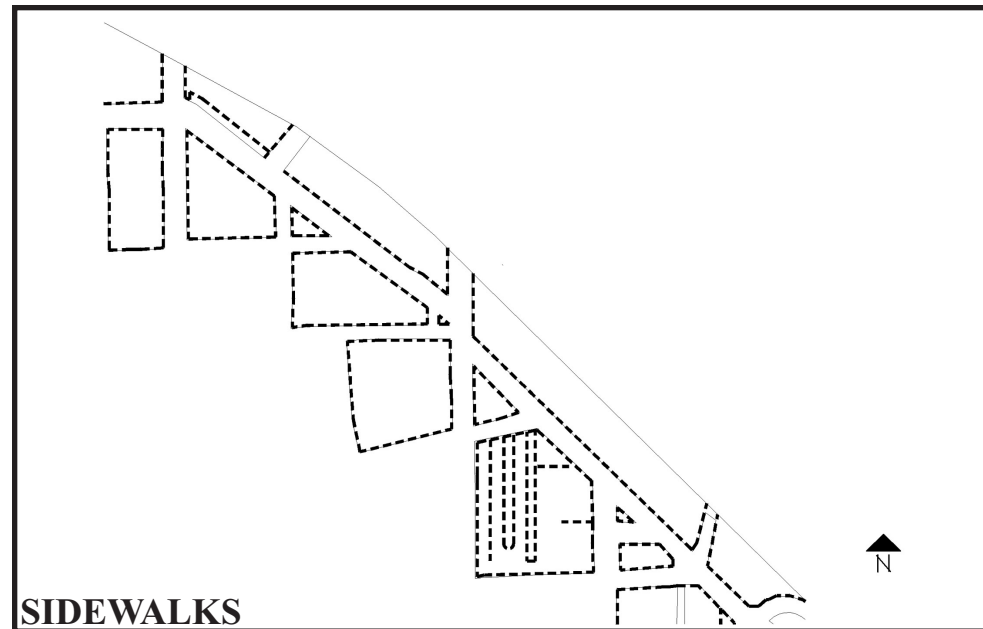
- Property taxes are adapted on eligible properties which complete rehabilitation to abandoned/underutilized buildings in order to convert them into artist live/work spaces.
- Writers, composers and artists who reside within the district are exempt from sales tax. This can also apply to galleries and other arts and entertainment districts designated by the general assembly.
- The Providence Plan was created as a nonprofit corporation designed to build partnerships between government agencies, non-profits, the private sector, the university community, and concerned residents.
- The Providence Plan Arts and Culture Working Group, representing various organizations including arts centers, youth groups, immigrant groups, and others, set out to “Identify area and issues of interest; Conceive of ways to integrate community-identified needs into [policy] change; and Find ways to make that information accessible and useful to arts and culture groups in Providence.”
- Key themes focused on were:
 - Visibility* of smaller arts activities and organizations were enhanced to promote and obtain support and resources.
 - Database Development* was produced to serve arts organizations and the public with a focus on smaller neighborhood arts activities.
 - Boundary Crossing* was identified as a way to explore a more diverse community with the goal of breaking social barriers.



EXISTING LAND USE, TUCSON HISTORIC WAREHOUSE ARTS DISTRICT



EXISTING CONDITIONS, TUCSON HISTORIC WAREHOUSE ARTS DISTRICT



ECONOMIC FACTS

- There are 17 separate State-Owned rented properties for a total of 224,000 square feet.
- The total rental income as of October 2003 was \$15,151 per month or \$181,812 per year. [The current income (May 2004) is somewhat less than this amount.]
- The rental income translates to an average of \$0.81 per square foot per year with a range of \$0.19 per square foot per year to \$6.60 per square foot per year.
- Sub-lease rental figures vary by property and are not currently available.
- The City is borrowing \$210,000 (two-year, no interest) from the Pima Association of Government (PAG) for building repairs and intends to repay the loan over the next 24 months from the rental income.
- The construction contract with Caylor construction to improve the seven properties most in need of structural improvement will begin soon. The value of this contract is almost \$300,000 and the scope of work came from a study by Cannon and Associates, structural engineers. The cost of this construction contract will be paid from the PAG loan which in turn will be re-paid by rental income. The construction is waiting on the finalization of the loan from PAG which, in turn, depends on a purchase of other State property with Rio Nuevo funds and the executed right of entry from Arizona Department of Transportation.
- Chapman Lindsey is currently under contract for the property management of the State-owned property. They were selected by an open and competitive process according to the City of Tucson Procurement Code rules and regulations, which the City is obligated to follow for public asset management.
- 35 East Toole (just west of 7th Avenue, with white arches) is currently vacated and will remain so until a hazardous (petroleum-based) material clean-up can take place in the rear of the property. The clean-up is being paid for by \$200,000 from an EPA federal Brownfields grant obtained by the City of Tucson.
- The State-owned property at 506 North Stone (northeast corner of Stone and 6th) has been vacated by Foree Tire. The income from that property was \$1,100 per month; or \$1.67 per square foot per year. There are no immediate plans to lease that space prior to the outcome of this Master Plan process.



MASTER PLAN GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- The assets needed to develop a thriving Warehouse Arts District are already in place.
 1. *City builders*: the population of artists, performers, craftspeople, shops, institutions, museums, etc, that make up the District -- the best, brightest, and most creative people in our community.
 2. *Master leaseholders*: with years of successful management
 3. *Arts advocacy groups*: strong and supportive organizations with years of work in the District
 4. *The City of Tucson*: debt-free buildings and vacant property under public control.
 5. *Rio Nuevo*: a context of positive change in resources and commitment
 6. *Private market*: a strengthening downtown private market demand
- There are obstacles to the development of the Warehouse Arts District.
 1. The Barraza-Aviation roadway alignment is a Sword of Damocles hanging over the District.
 2. The buildings are in poor physical condition after decades of neglect
 3. There are legal constraints on City and State governments
 4. There is mistrust and suspicion of the various parties' interests and intentions
- Develop a Warehouse Arts District Plan within a larger Arts Vision
 1. There needs to be an over-arching Mayor and Council Arts and Culture Public Policy.
 2. The Policy should clearly identify a Downtown Arts District with agreed-upon sub-districts
 3. The Historic Warehouse Arts District should be planned in that context.
- There needs to be a Plan of Action consistent with the larger vision, including:
 1. Existing structures improvements regarding safety, functionality and appearance
 2. Transportation, including circulation, bicycles, pedestrians and parking
 3. Open space
 4. New development
 5. A transparent financial plan, maintaining affordability and balancing income/expenses
 6. Effective arts-and-artist-centered management
 7. Arts programming
 8. Marketing and publicity
 9. Financing of capital improvements
- There needs to be neighborhood buy-in and support: from El Presidio, Dunbar Spring, West University, Barrio Anita, Pie Allen, and Iron Horse



MASTER PLAN GOALS

The following goals were developed from the Historic Warehouse Arts District Public Participation Plan:

- The Tucson Historic Warehouse Arts District shall be a center for **incubation, production and exhibition of the arts**.
- **Artists** are the heart of this incubation and production role. Artists contribute when they live, work and/or produce in the District. Therefore, economic policies must primarily be geared to true affordability of living, working, and exhibition space. All efforts must be taken to prevent market-driven artist displacement.
- The Historic Warehouse Arts District shall strive for **mixed uses**, enhancing arts incubation and arts production with private and public galleries and museums, indoor and outdoor performance venues, housing, arts-related education, arts-related retail, and other compatible land uses.
- The Historic Warehouse Arts District shall be a place of **diversity** - human diversity, diversity of culture, diversity of income, diversity of media, diversity of perspective, and diversity of experience. Aesthetic judgment and any form of arts censorship has no place in the District.
- The Historic Warehouse Arts District shall be recognized for the important contribution that the arts make to our local and regional **economy**. The focus of the arts shall strive to be outward-looking, encouraging exhibition, sales, education, festival, and the participation of the public. An outdoor performance venue is a high priority. Coordinated arts programming is an essential part of a successful arts district.
- The Historic Warehouse Arts District must be **sustainable**. It must be a public-private partnership with a fundamentally-sound financial and management policy, carefully balancing income and expenses. It is important that a marketing plan be developed that promotes the assets of the district, but economic planning must remain artist-based.
- The Historic Warehouse Arts District must be a **responsible neighbor**. It should work closely with adjoining neighborhoods and districts to insure compatibility of design, circulation, and activity.
- The buildings of the district are both **historic** and in **poor condition**. A capital improvement plan for existing structures needs to be implemented that insures safety, respects historic character, and meets and respects the needs of artists, arts-related businesses and other district occupants.



- **Vacant and surface parking lot properties** interrupt the continuity of the fabric of the district. While they serve a current purpose of providing parking, they have an enormous potential for the development of new uses that can strengthen the character and appeal of the district. The district should encourage conversion of vacant land and surface parking into compatible arts-related uses.
- The Historic Warehouse Arts District must be a **pedestrian and bicycle-friendly** place. Pedestrian and bicycle connections to adjoining neighborhoods must be maintained and enhanced. The experience of the district should promote activities at the pedestrian-scale with appropriate public art, landscape, shade, outdoor display venues, lighting, and signage. Public transit should be a key component of the district design.
- **Automobile traffic** with destinations outside of the district detracts from the pedestrian character and diminishes the arts character of the district. Vehicular circulation should be carefully studied and modified to reduce through-traffic and reduce the negative impact of cars and roads on the district.
- Public **parking** is a strong need in creating a successful Historic Warehouse Arts District, but parking should be solved as part of a greater downtown municipal parking plan, rather than on a parcel-by-parcel, project-by-project basis.
- The **environmental** problems of the district must be acknowledged and resolved to the extent feasible. Noise, air pollution, and ground contamination are a fact of life in the district, but it is important that these be reduced, mitigated, or eliminated wherever possible and financially feasible.

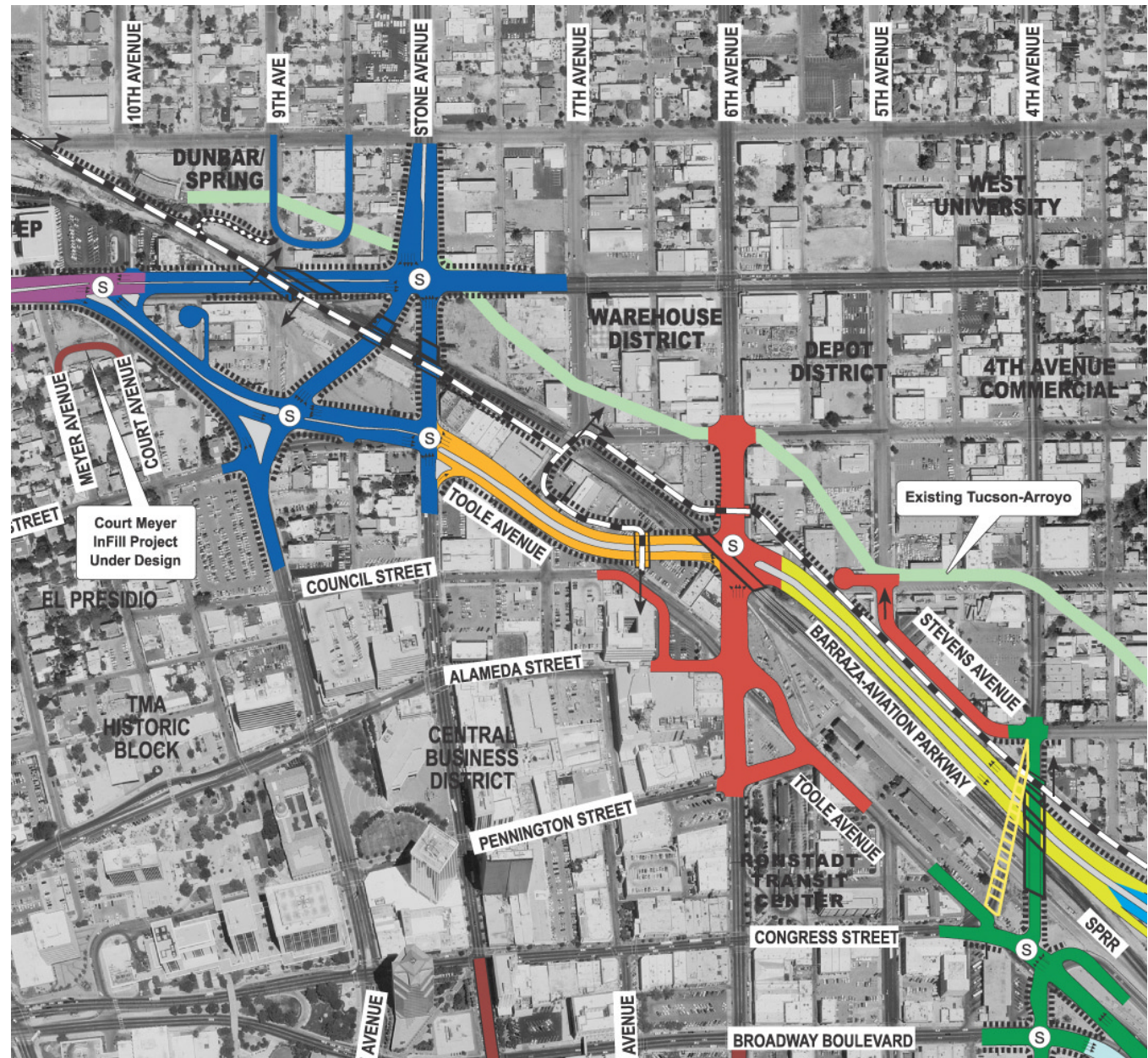


HISTORIC WAREHOUSE ARTS DISTRICT PHYSICAL MASTER PLAN



RECOMMENDATION 1

Begin the process to officially **discard** the current **Barraza-Aviation alignment** west of 6th Avenue. Study a “north-side-of-the-tracks-only” alternative connecting to Stone at 6th Street.



RECOMMENDATION 2

Utilize an **artist/tenant-centered Warehouse Arts District Management Organization** to manage the City-controlled, State-owned properties. This group should manage the tenant selection process, leases, rent levels and structure, daily operations, short-term and long-term capital improvement policies for the State-Owned/City Operated warehouse buildings.



- Develop a **collaborative inclusive process**, facilitated by Stephen Goldsmith, to create an appropriate structure for this organization. Participants in this process will include, at a minimum, TAC, T/PAC, TDA, TMA, BDFC, current leaseholders and master leaseholders, Chapman Lindsey, and City/Rio Nuevo staff.
- The tenant selection process and rent levels for State-owned/City-controlled properties shall be on a **sliding scale** determined case-by-case based on the tenants' need and congruence with the overall goals for the Historic Warehouse Arts District.
- The selection of new tenants for State-owned/City-controlled warehouse space and the rents that new and existing tenants will pay should be based on **their conformance with the goals of the Historic Warehouse Arts District**. The following are proposed guidelines that will be used to establish rent levels and select new tenants. In general, the more guidelines the tenant meets, the lower the rent levels are likely to be. These guidelines are intended to be an objective basis for negotiation of rent levels/tenant selection not a strict formula. It is recognized that there are many other issues that would go into each individual property and tenant decision:

1. **Arts related activities** - Is the tenant making a positive contribution to the overall arts character of the district?
2. **Economic contribution** - Is the tenant structured as a community-based organization? Is it non-profit? Can it demonstrate sweat equity or a substantial exchange of service or contribution of economic value to the building or the district?
3. **Diversity** - Does the tenant contribute to the diversity - human, cultural, income, media, perspective, experience - of the district?
4. **Public orientation** - Is the tenant committed to sharing his or her art to with the public through exhibits, studio tours, workshops, educational programs, and events?
5. **Competence** - Does the tenant display an objective level of competence in the chosen art area?
6. **Productivity** - Is the artist serious about the work and can that seriousness be demonstrated by levels of productivity, experience, peer evaluations, and hours committed to art production?
7. **Need** - Has the tenant demonstrated a need for lower rent based on income, production costs, and/or space demands?

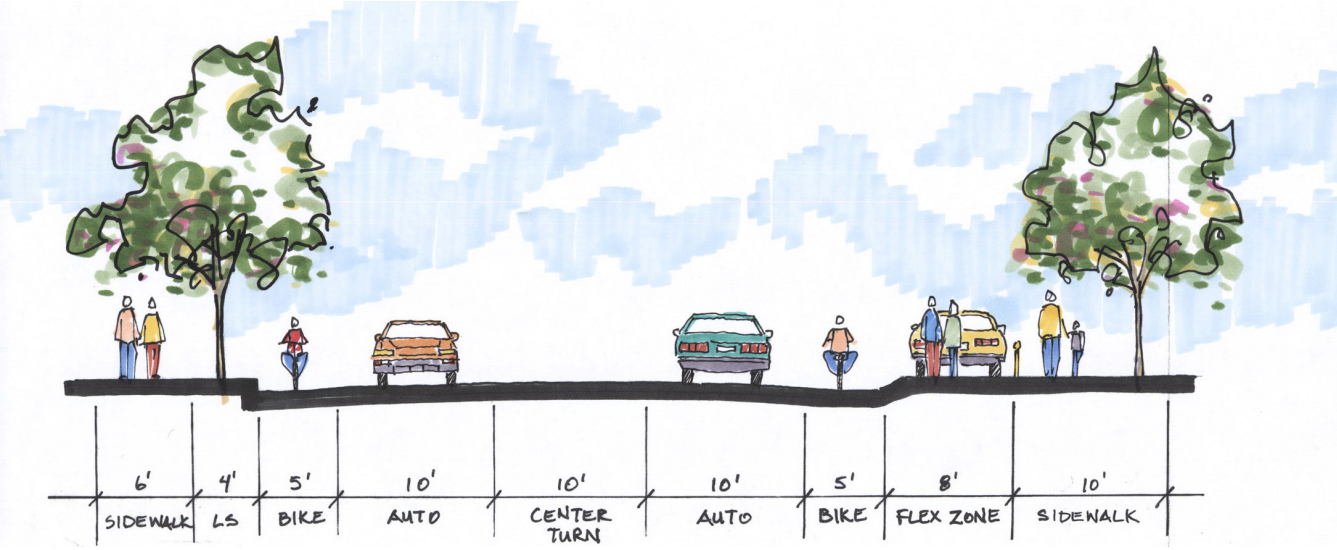
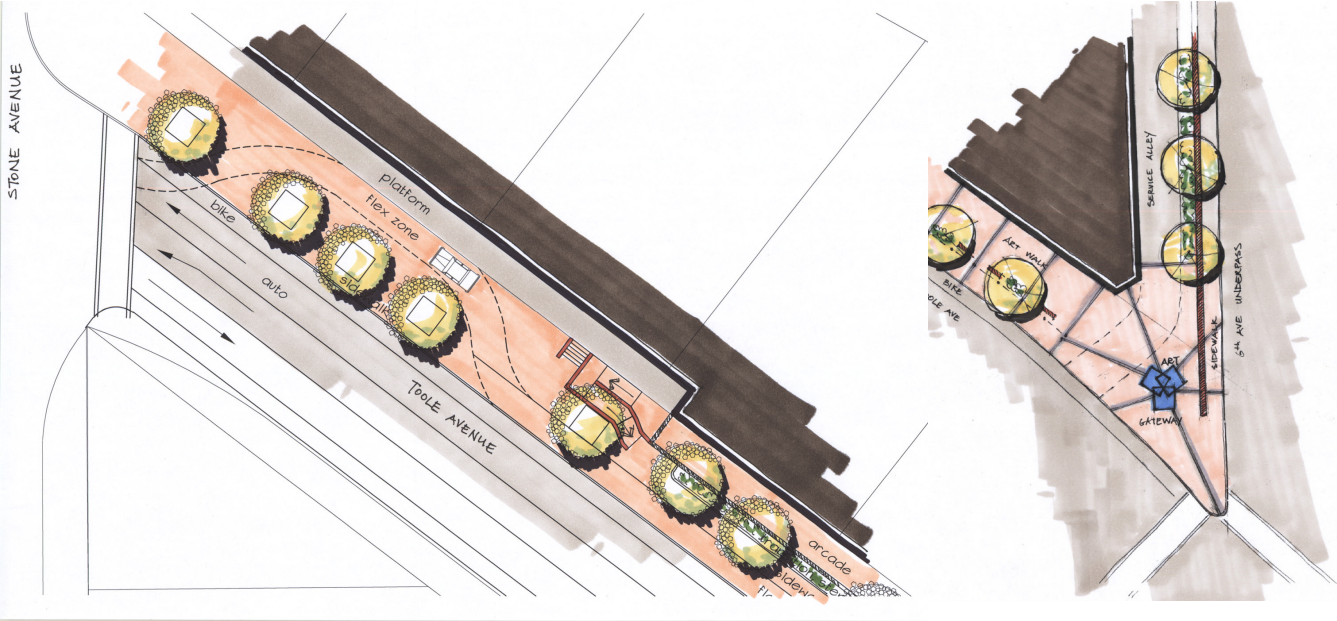
RECOMMENDATION 3

Work closely with artists/tenants to **improve the safety** of existing buildings. Invest in a **façade improvement** project to improve the appearance of buildings and to clean up the electrical wire mess along Toole Avenue.



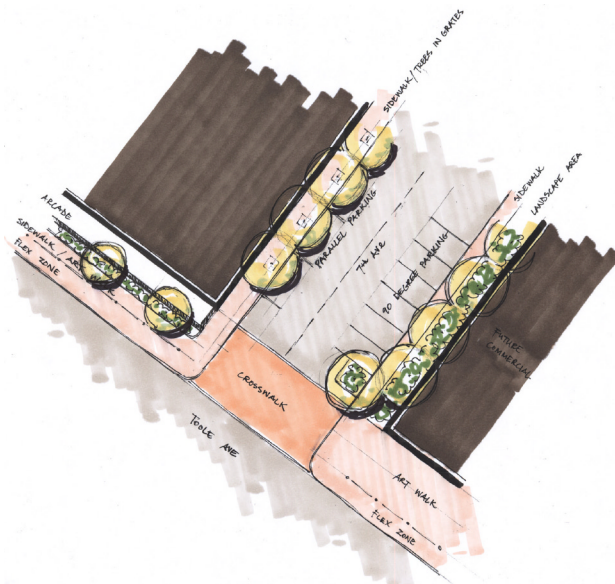
RECOMMENDATION 4

Reconfigure Toole Avenue to create a 25' "urban artwalk" on the north side of Toole Ave. from 6th Ave to Church Ave.



RECOMMENDATION 5

Strengthen pedestrian and bicycle connections across the railroad and across 6th Street.



RECOMMENDATION 6

Outline goals for a long-term **activities programming plan** for the district



RECOMMENDATION 7

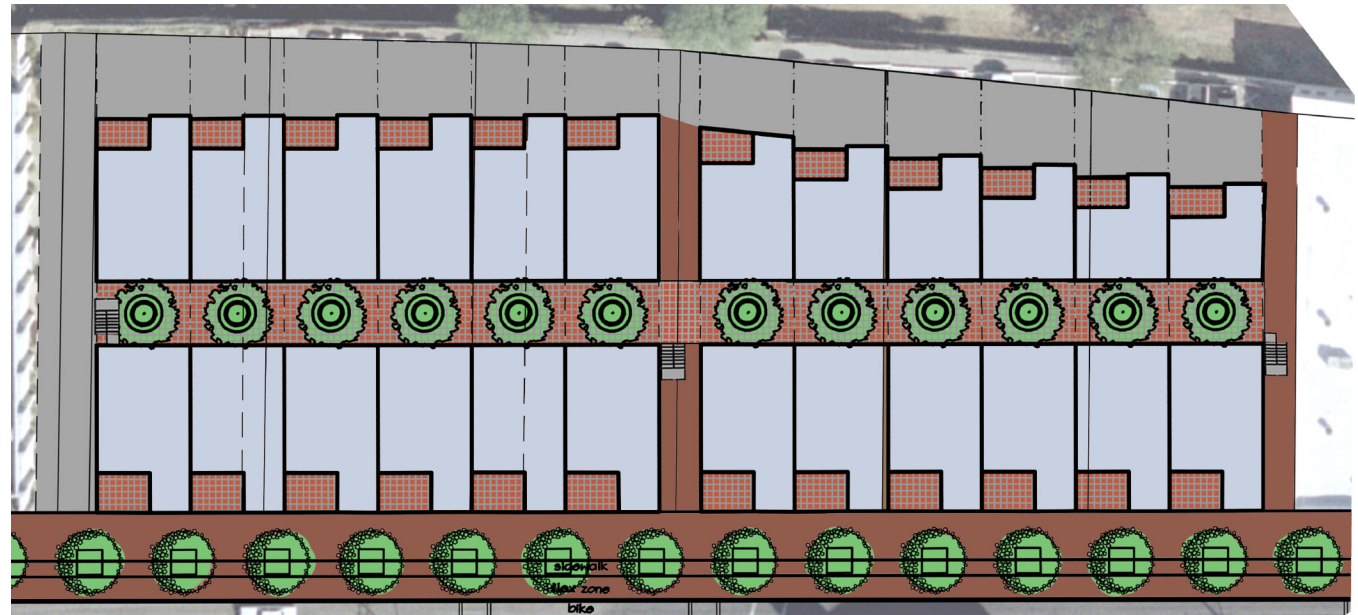
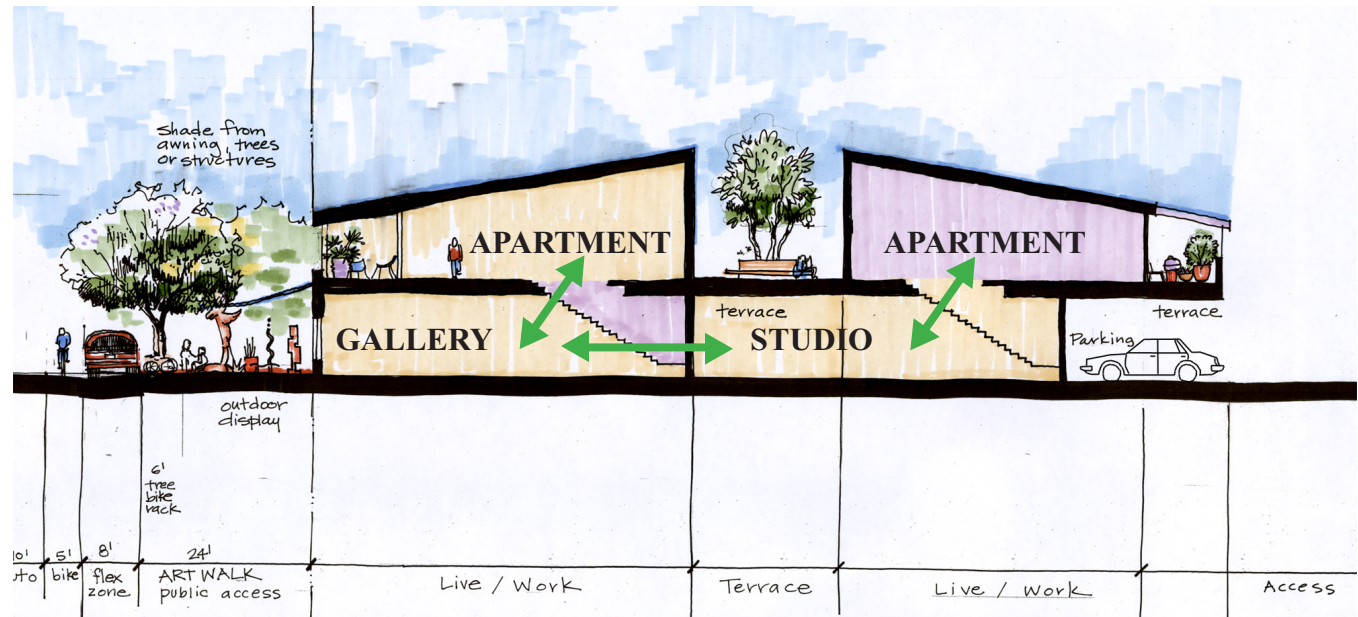
Outline goals for a long-term **marketing/**
publicity plan for the district



RECOMMENDATION 8

Develop the four major vacant parcels currently used for parking.

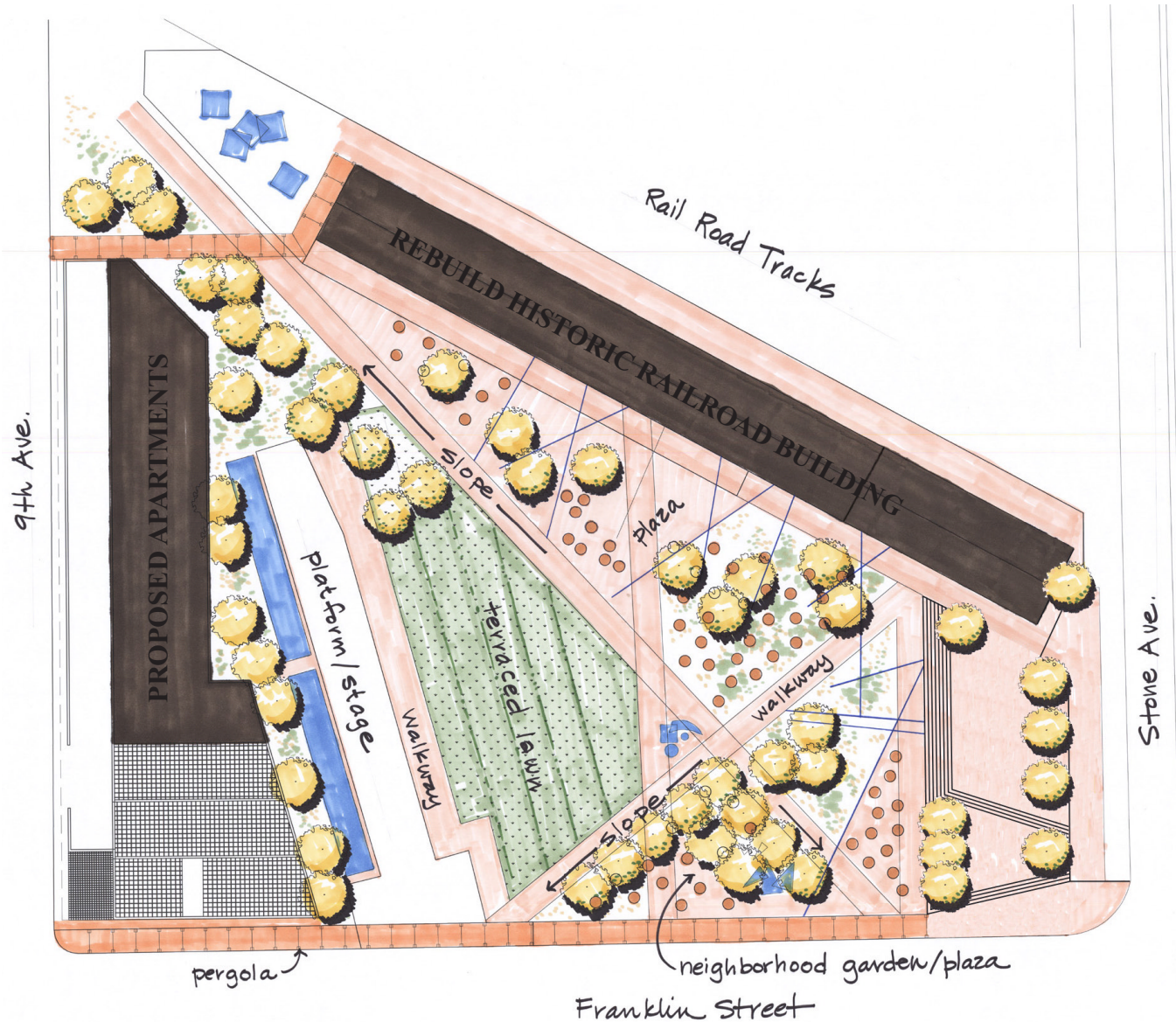
1. Develop the lot west of MOCA for mixed and combined uses: work space, display space/retail, and affordable urban housing.



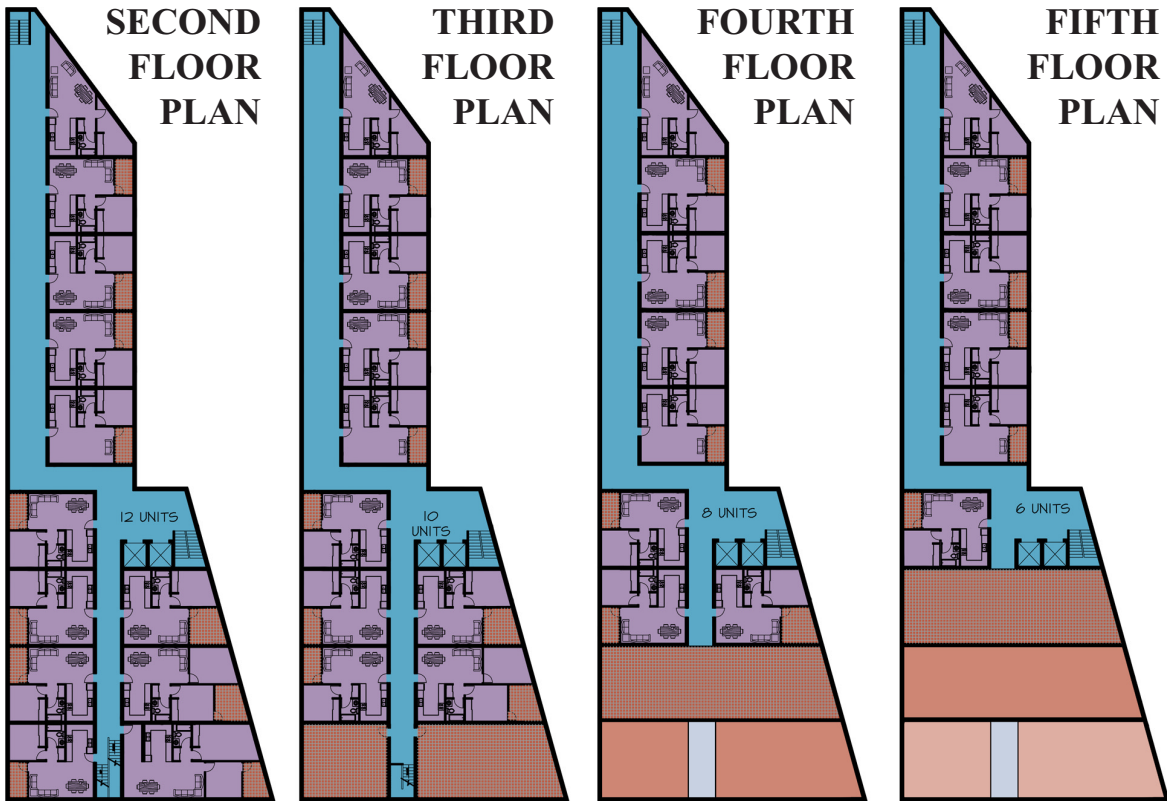
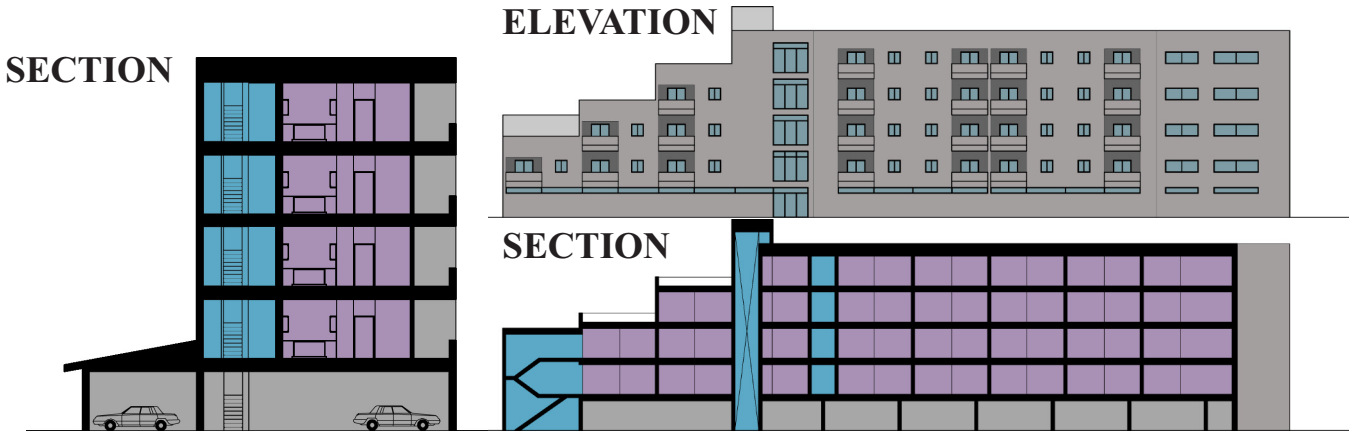
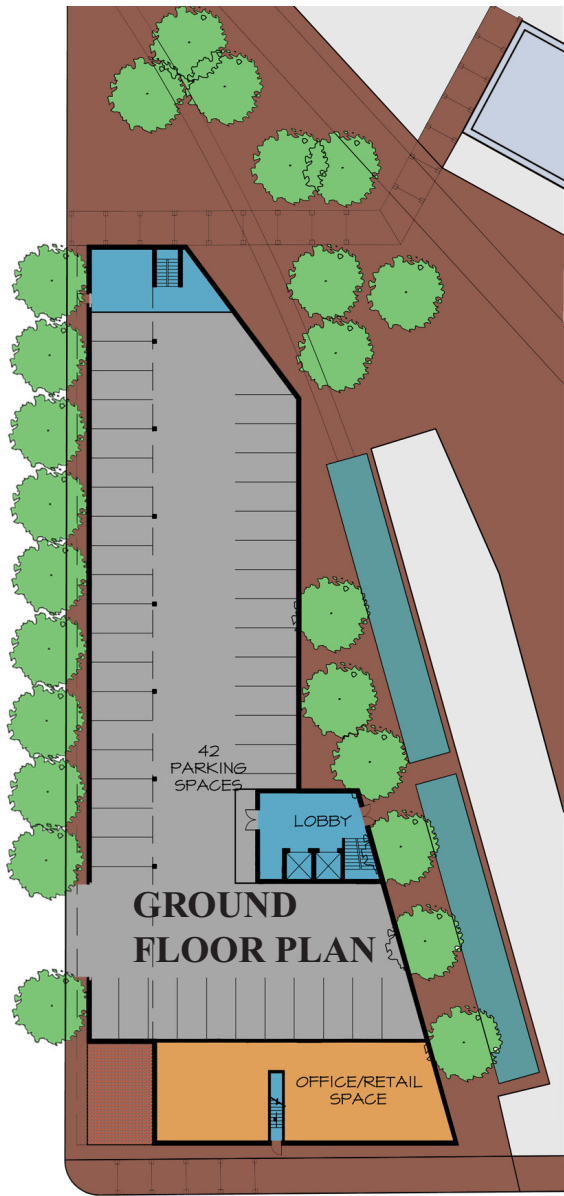
RECOMMENDATION 8

Develop the four major vacant parcels currently used for parking.

2. Develop the “Platforms Site” (northwest of Stone and Toole) as mixed use: outdoor performance plaza, housing, entertainment, retail, office and/or an arts school. Use the original construction drawings, specifications and vintage photographs of the historic railroad buildings on the northern edge of the site to rebuild these historic buildings for contemporary adaptive uses.

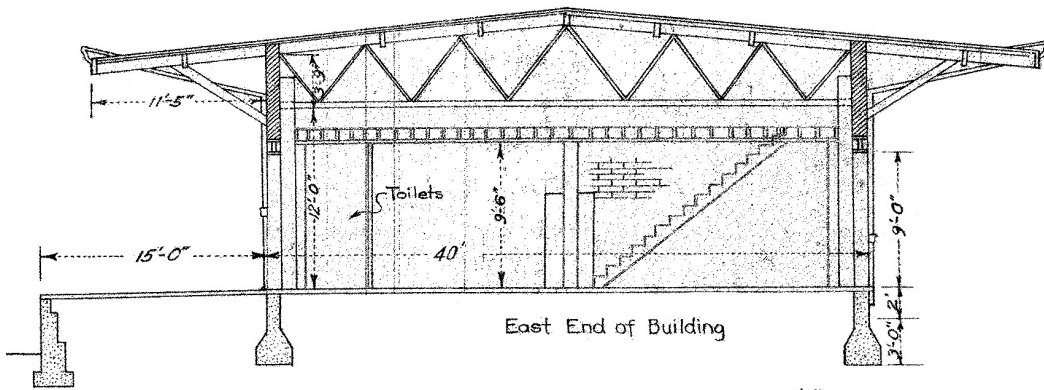
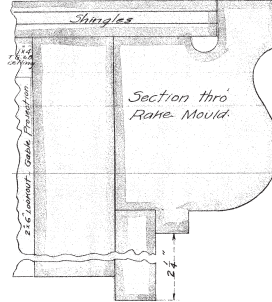


PLATFORMS SITE 60 APARTMENT UNITS

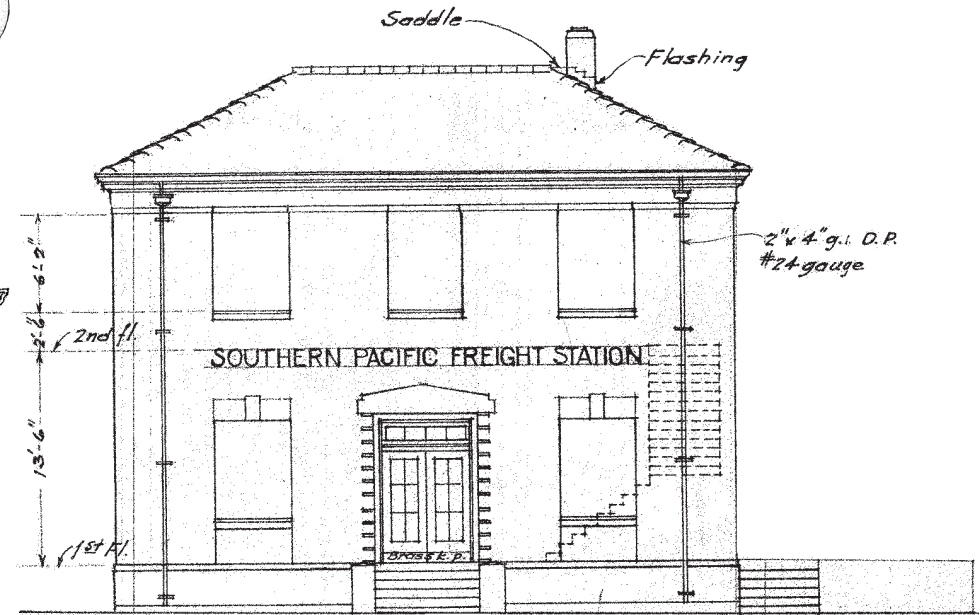


PLATFORMS SITE

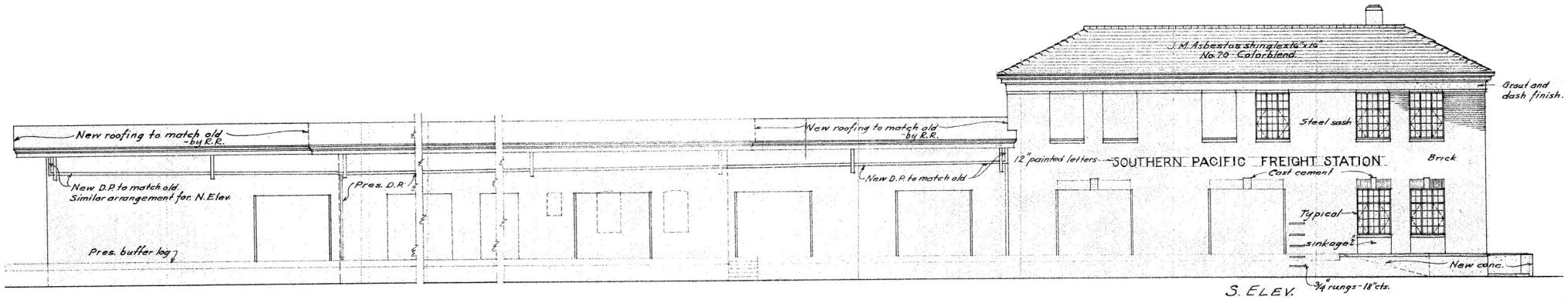
REBUILD HISTORIC RAILROAD BUILDING (FOR MUSEUM? STUDIOS? GALLERIES? ART SCHOOL?)



SECTION SCALE $\frac{1}{8}'' = 1'-0''$



E. ELEV.



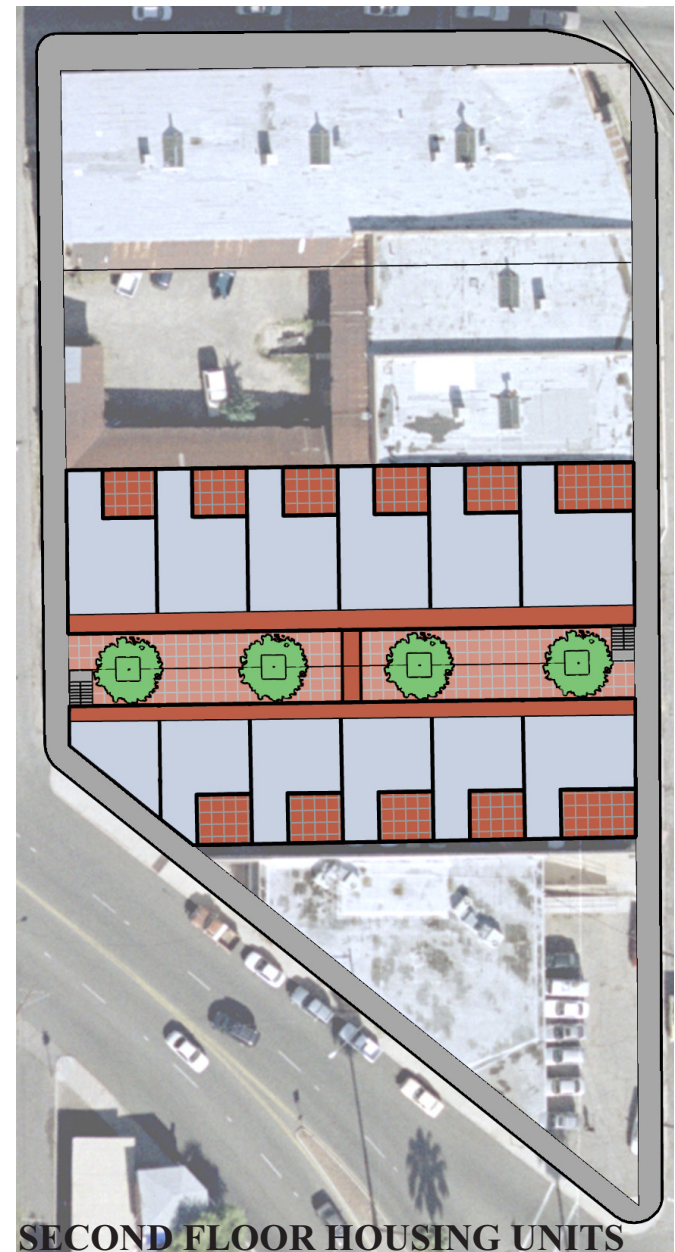
RECOMMENDATION 8

Develop the four major vacant parcels currently used for parking.

3. Develop the lot south of the Steinfeld Warehouse as mixed use: work space, display space/retail, and affordable urban housing.



GROUND FLOOR STUDIOS



SECOND FLOOR HOUSING UNITS

RECOMMENDATION 8

Develop the four major vacant parcels currently used for parking.

4. Develop a restaurant or other appropriate infill use on the parking lot west of COPE.

